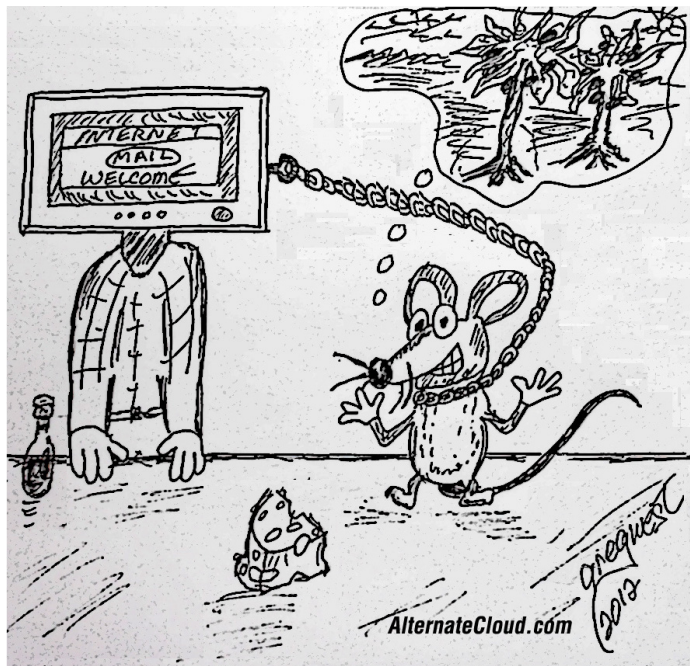


Amateur Computer Group of New Jersey NEWS

Volume 38, Number 06

June 2013

Cartoon By Greg West



"BILL GATES SAID I COULD RETIRE AFTER 30 YEARS."

Mini-Editorial Ideas Wanted!

Whether or not you are a member, we need your ideas about how to make this newsletter better. We'll seriously consider any suggestions that we receive. So please send us something. Thank you.



<http://www.acgnj.org>

Founded 1975

ACGNJ Meetings

For the very latest news on ACGNJ meetings, please visit the ACGNJ Website (www.acgnj.org).

Lunics (Linux/UNIX): Monday, June 3, 8:00 PM
Andreas Meyer (lunics (at) acgnj.org)

Board of Directors Meeting: Tues, Jun 4, 7:00 PM
Mike Redlich (president (at) acgnj.org)

Main Meeting: Friday, June 7, 8:00 PM
Mike Redlich (president (at) acgnj.org)

Layman's Forum: Monday, June 10, 8:00 PM
Matt Skoda (som359 (at) aol.com)

Java: Tuesday, June 11, 7:30 PM
Mike Redlich (mike (at) redlich.net)

Mobile Devices: Wednesday, June 12, 7:30 PM
Brenda Bell (mobdevsig (at) acgnj.org)

Investing: Thursday, June 13, 8:00 PM
Jim Cooper (jim (at) thecoop.org)

NJ Gamers: Friday, June 14, 6:00 PM
Gregg McCarthy (greggmajestic (at) gmail.com)

Web Browser: Monday, June 17, 7:30 PM
David McRitchie (firefox (at) acgnj.org)

C/C++: Tuesday, June 18, 7:30 PM
Bruce Arnold (barnold (at) ieee.org)

Window Pains: Friday, June 21, 8:00 PM
John Raff (john (at) jraff.com)

All meetings, unless otherwise noted, are at the Scotch Plains Rescue Squad, 1916 Bartle Ave, Scotch Plains, New Jersey. Directions and map on back page. 📍

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Submissions: Articles, reviews, cartoons, illustrations. Most common formats are acceptable. Graphics embedded in the document must also be sent as separate files. E-mail submissions to newsletter@acgnj.org preferred. **Always confirm.** Date review and include name of word processor used, your name, address and phone and name, address and phone of manufacturer, if available.

Tips for reviewers: Why does anyone need it? Why did you like it or hate it? Ease (or difficulty) of installation, learning and use. Would you pay for it?

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Address Changes should be e-mailed to membership@acgnj.org or sent to ACGNJ at the address below.

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Typographic Note: This ACGNJ News was produced using Scribus 1.3.3.13. Font families used are Times New Roman (TT) for body text, Arial (TT) for headlines.

E-Mail Addresses

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Nephew of “Why So Big?”

Bob Hawes, ACGNJ

At the end of *Niece of “Why So Big?”* (my article for our May 2013 issue), I said; “I should perform at least one more PDF file size comparison, this time between a Linux/Scribus 1.3.3.13 system and a Linux/Scribus 1.4.0 system”, and “I really should do more TIF experiments”. In this article, I hope to accomplish both of those goals; but why TIF? Here's a more-or-less direct quote from the Scribus Manual; “There are three kinds of file formats that work well for images like photos and anything that is made up of pixels and have been time tested: TIFF, tif and Tiff. No matter which way you spell it, TIF is the file format for bitmap images. Period. End of story. Don't give me any arguments: I'll win”. Further below, we'll see if *I* agree with that particular author; but first, for your convenience, here are some recaps:

Scribus is my fun, fabulous, and *free* desktop publisher. Its newer 1.4.x releases are *!!!NOT!!!* backwards compatible with its earlier 1.3.x releases. **GIF** (Graphics Interchange Format) files were

introduced by CompuServe in the mid eighties. They're *compact*, and they use lossless data compression; but they support only 256 colors. Unfortunately, some transcendent genius at Scribus has decreed that you'll get useless, intrusive and distracting “Image is GIF” error messages any time that you use them. **JPG** (or JPEG, for **J**oint **P**hotographic **E**xperts **G**roup) files were introduced by the ISO (**I**nternational **S**tandards **O**rganization), also in the mid eighties. They're *very* popular for digital photography, even though (or maybe *because*) they use lossy compression.

TIF (or TIFF, for **T**agged **I**mage **F**ile **F**ormat) files were introduced in the mid eighties as well, by the Aldus Corporation. Originally created for desktop scanners, they were quickly adopted by the publishing industry in general. They support lossless *or* lossy compression, as desired. **PNG** (**P**ortable **N**etwork **G**raphics) files employ lossless data compression. Their specification was originally

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authored via e-mail in the mid *nineties*, by a group of computer graphics users who were dissatisfied with GIF files for various reasons.

OK. Let's get down to business. Back in January, the borrowed Vista laptop computer that I was using while I was in the hospital (to make our October, November and December newsletters, using the Windows version of Scribus 1.4.1) crashed suddenly (and *very* thoroughly), taking my not quite finished January newsletter along with it. It took me two special day-trips home (a total of 14 hours) to create a replacement January issue from scratch on my main Linux computer (booted from my Ubuntu 11.04 hard disk, and running Scribus 1.3.3.13). Now, I plan to *de*-construct that January replacement newsletter twice, and then *re*-construct it several times more. For consistency, I'll start with Scribus 1.4.0. This will allow me to follow the precedents established in *Why So Big?* (December 2012). *Son of “Why So Big?”* (January 2013). *Daughter of “Why So Big?”* (February 2013). and *Niece of “Why So Big?”* (May 2013).

But first, just a little bit *more* recap: As inferred above, to get a system running Scribus 1.3.3.13 (my preferred version), I currently have to boot my computer from my *way* out of date Ubuntu 11.04 hard disk. However, in *Revenge of the 13 Things* (my article in our April 2013 issue), I described how I upgraded my hardly-ever-used Ubuntu 11.10 hard disk to version 12.04 LTS. (As a **L**ong **T**erm **S**upport release, it *still* has two more years to go before it expires). If I'd used that 11.10 disk more often, I might have noticed that Scribus 1.4.0 had been automatically installed when it was created. As a result, my new 12.04 system *also* has 1.4.0. I'll try to *back-grade* (downgrade?) this version of Scribus eventually, but for now, I've got it, so I'll use it.

One more digression, (but that's *it*. I promise). I don't know if I've ever sufficiently explained the difference in the way Scribus treats text files and image files. When I right-click on an empty text frame, and then choose “Get Text”, Scribus actually *does* copy that text into its work file; but when I right-click on an empty image frame, and choose

"Get Image", Scribus *doesn't* really copy that image. It just copies that file's name and location into its work file. While it's true that the image *seems* to appear in that image frame, it is, in fact just a preview picture, like a thumbnail. Only when I choose "File > Export > Save as PDF" does Scribus actually copy *any* of its images into its output PDF file; and *only* as it actually creates that PDF. So below, when I say that I'm deleting an image from a Scribus work file, I'm really only deleting that image's file *name*.

So now let's *really* get down to business. The Scribus work file for our January issue was named 2013Jan7.sla. Leaving the original file *untouched*, I made two copies of it, and renamed them 2013Jan7-3.sla and 2013Jan7-4.sla. (3 for Scribus 1.3.3.13 and 4 for Scribus 1.4.0). Opening the 4 version, I immediately made a PDF from it, just as it was. It measured 3.2 MB. Going to page 16, I deleted that page's one and only image, the 414 KB file 1108page16-150.png. I got a PDF measuring 2.5 MB. A 0.7 MB decrease. (Actually 707.2 KB). Then,

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in PDF size. There were no images on page 11. On page 10, the sole image was a a 6.2 KB file named PC-SeeYa.png. Deleting it gave me an 11 KB decrease in PDF size. There were also no images on pages 9 through 2, so that brings us to page 1. Its first image was the one undeleted copy of the 7.5 KB file TINY_PC2.gif. Deleting it gave me a 27.4 KB decrease in PDF size. The second (and last) image on page 1 was the 64.1 KB file ACGNJ3RC.PNG. Deleting it gave me a **258 KB** decrease in output file size, for a final PDF measuring 1.1 MB.

Except for that surprisingly large final decrease, everything seemed to parallel my earlier articles. (At least as far as sizes went). So I shut down my computer and switched to my Ubuntu 11.04 hard disk (to get Scribus 1.3.3.13). I opened 2013Jan7-3.sla, my previously prepared extra copy of the January work file. As before, I immediately made a PDF from it, just as it was. It measured 2.2 MB. Here we hit our first difference. Remember, the initial PDF made by 1.4.0 (just three paragraphs above) measured 3.2 MB. Right up front, it seems

going to page 15, I deleted its one and only image, the 308 KB file 1108page15-150.png. I got a PDF measuring 2.0 MB. A 0.5 MB decrease. (Actually 480.7 KB).

On page 14, I deleted its largest file first, the 2.5 **MB** file NL_CD_12.png, and got a PDF measuring 1.4 MB. That would seem to yield a decrease of 0.6 MB; but that's due to inaccuracies when the MB figures were "rounded off". It's actually a *true* difference of 512 KB. The seven remaining images on page 14, and the six images on page 13 were *all* copies of the same image, the 7.5 KB file TINY_PC2.gif. (The teeny tiny computer pictures that we use to mark the ends of various closing paragraphs). Deleting them gave me an output PDF measuring 1.4 MB. That would seem to indicate a decrease of zero MB; but that's another "rounding" inaccuracy. It's actually a *true* difference of **38 bytes**. (That's because I hadn't really deleted any images, only *links* to an as-yet *undeleted* image elsewhere in the PDF).

On page 12, the sole image was a 31 KB file named PC-3line.png. Deleting it gave me a 63 KB decrease

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that a PDF made by 1.3.3.13 will come out about 1 MB *smaller* than a PDF made by 1.4.0. Will this trend hold?

Going to page 16 as before, I deleted its one and only image, the 414 KB file 1108page16-150.png; and I got a PDF measuring 1.9 MB. A 0.3 MB decrease. (Actually 293.8 KB). Then, going to page 15, I deleted its one and only image, the 308 KB file 1108page15-150.png; and I got a PDF measuring 1.7 MB. A 0.2 MB decrease. (Actually 257 KB). On page 14, I deleted NL_CD_12.png first. (The largest file, remember, measuring 2.5 MB); and I got a PDF measuring 1.2 MB. A 0.5 MB decrease. (Actually 509 KB. Close).

As before, the seven remaining images on page 14, and the six images on page 13 were all copies of the 7.5 KB file TINY_PC2.gif. Deleting them gave me an output PDF measuring 1.2 MB. (For a true difference of **44 bytes**. Pretty close to the 38 bytes above, but *not* smaller, as I'd expected). As above, the lone image on page 12 was the 31 KB file PC-3line.png. Deleting it gave me a 27.3 KB decrease in

PDF size. There were no images on page 11. On page 10, the lone image was the 6.2 KB file PC-SeeYa.png. Deleting it gave me a 6.6 KB decrease in PDF size.

As expected, there were no images, lone, riding again, or otherwise, on pages 9 through 2, so that brings us to page 1. Its first image was the one undeleted copy of the 7.5 KB file TINY_PC2.gif. Deleting it gave me a 6.8 KB decrease in PDF size. The second (and last) image on page 1 was the 64.1 KB file ACGNJ3RC.PNG. Deleting it gave me a mere **94.3** KB decrease in output file size (compared to **258** KB above), for a final output PDF that *also* measured 1.1 MB. (In fact, there was only a 44.4 KB difference between the two, with the previous 1.4.0 result winding up *smaller* than this most recent 1.3.3.13 result. **Not at all** what I'd expected).

That unforeseen and oh-so-close result made me change some of my plans for the rest of this article; but my first two steps remained the same. I made a copy of each of my two now image-less Scribus work files (2013Jan7-3.sla and 2013Jan7-4.sla) and

renamed them 2013Jan7-3-O.sla and 2013Jan7-4-O.sla. (O for “Original”). These will be saved as just-in-case emergency backups. Next, as planned, I made two more copies of my 1.4.0 work file (2013Jan7-4.sla), one for adding JPG files, and one for adding TIF files; but I changed their proposed names slightly, to 2013Jan7-44J.sla and 2013Jan7-44T.sla. (The 44 means *deconstructed* by 1.4.0, and then *reconstructed* by 1.4.0. The J means using only JPG files, while the T means using only TIF files).

Then, I made *four* more copies of my 1.3.3.13 work file (2013Jan7-3.sla); and renamed them 2013Jan7-33J.sla, 2013Jan7-33T.sla, 2013Jan7-34J.sla and 2013Jan7-34T.sla. (33 means a “pure” version: *deconstructed* by 1.3.3.13, and then *also reconstructed* by 1.3.3.13, while 34 signifies a “hybrid” version: *deconstructed* by 1.3.3.13, then *reconstructed* by **1.4.0**. As before, J means using only JPG files, and T means using only TIF files). While I fully expect my “hybrid 34” and “pure 44” results to come out very close to equal for their respective file formats, I feel that I should test each

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of them at least once, just to be sure.

However, we'll do Scribus 1.3.3.13 first. Starting with 2013Jan7-33J.sla, I went to page 1. Its first image was the newly converted 134.3 KB file ACGNJ3RC.**JPG**. Adding it gave me an increase of 136.8 KB. Adding page 1's second image, the recently converted 14.7 KB file TINY_PC2.**jpg**, gave me an increase of 15.3 KB. On page 10, the only image was the 6.2 KB file PC-SeeYa.**jpg**. Adding it gave me a 6.6 KB increase in PDF size. As above, the sole image on page 12 was the 38.5 KB file PC-3line.**jpg**. Adding it gave me a 39.7 KB increase in PDF size.

As before, the six images on page 13 and seven of the eight images on page 14 were all copies of the 14.7 KB file TINY_PC2.**jpg**. As expected, adding them gave me a difference of only **75 bytes**. The remaining image on page 14 was the 253.8 KB file NL_CD_12.**jpg**. Adding it gave me a 260 KB increase. Going to page 15, I added its one and only image, 1108page15-150.**jpg**, (a 302.7 KB file) and I got a 310 KB increase. Then, on page 16, I added its

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one and only image, the 449.9 KB file 1108page16-150.**jpg**; and I got a 461 KB increase, for a final PDF measuring 2.2 MB.

All in all, a big disappointment. Remember that when we started our calculations (eleven paragraphs above), the initial PDF made by 1.4.0 measured 3.2 MB, while the initial PDF made by 1.3.3.13 came in at 2.2 MB. Here, we went to all that work, changed all our files to the JPG format, and our result for 1.3.3.13 turned out to be the same. Oh, well. Let's soldier on, and see what we get for TIF files. As an aside: Twenty-three years ago, when I got my first PC, I used TIF files *a whole lot*. In the last fifteen years or so, not all that much. Was I right or wrong to switch? Maybe we'll soon find out.

Otherwise sticking with Scribus 1.3.3.13, I opened 2013Jan7-33T.sla and went to its page 1. The first image was the 113.1 KB file ACGNJ3RC.**TIF**. Adding it gave me an increase of 98.5 KB. Adding page 1's second image, the 194.2 KB file TINY_PC2.**tif**, gave me an increase of 7.3 KB. On page 10, the only image was the 50.7 KB file PC-

SeeYa.tif. Adding it gave me a 5.1 KB increase in PDF size. As above, the sole image on page 12 was the 53.8 KB file PC-3line.tif. Adding it gave me a 27.6 KB increase in PDF size.

As before, the six images on page 13 and seven of the eight images on page 14 were all copies of the 194.2 KB file TINY_PC2.tif. As expected, adding them gave me a difference of only **75 bytes**. The remaining image on page 14 was the 2.7 **MB** file NL_CD_12.tif. Adding it gave me a 512 **KB** increase. Going to page 15, I added its one and only image, 1108page15-150.tif, (a 498.4 KB file) and I got a 259 KB increase. Then, on page 16, I added its one and only image, the 690.6 KB file 1108page16-150.tif, and I got a 302 KB increase, for a final PDF

measuring 2.2 MB.

At this point, we've completed all the 1.3.3.13 tests that I intended to do for this article. Normally, I'd proceed to my planned 1.4.0 tests; but as Monty Python used to say; "My brain hurts". Anyway, 2.2 MB = 2.2 MB = 2.2 MB. Right? Well, not exactly. Translated into KB, that initial 2.2 MB figure equals 2,311 KB, the TIF figure equals 2,314 KB, and the JPG figure equals 2,332 KB. So, in actual fact, the initial file combination wins, the exclusively TIF arrangement comes in a very close second, and the JPG files come in an almost-as-close third. However, my brain *still* hurts. It needs a rest. So:

See you next month. ☐

Extending the Life of Your XP PC

Dick Maybach, Brookdale Computer Users' Group, NJ

Newsletter: BUG Bytes (www.bcug.com) n2nd (at) charter.net

When you first got your PC with Windows XP it was blazingly fast and its hard disk was huge. But now,

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the disk-space shortage is probably obvious, you've stored thousands of photos, songs, and documents, and installed many programs. But what about the speed? Unlike you and I, electronic hardware doesn't slow down as it ages.

Hopefully, you've kept your software, especially your anti-virus program, up to date and have avoided downloading files from questionable sources. If not (or if someone who uses your PC is less careful), run a full virus and malware check and update Windows and all your applications before you try anything else.

At the time you bought your XP PC, 500 Mbytes of RAM was plenty, but the patches and enhancements you've added over the ensuing years means that the XP you now use is much different than the XP you originally bought. In particular, 500 Mbytes of RAM is now woefully inadequate. To check your RAM use, simultaneously press the *Control*, *Alt*, and *Delete* keys, select the *Task Manager* button on the Window that pops up, and then select the *Performance* tab.

I did this on my laptop and found that with no

maybe 10 years later, it has slowed, perhaps drastically so, and its disk is nearly full. The cause of

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applications running except for my virus checker, it was using about 814 Mbytes of RAM. Fortunately, this PC has 1 Gbyte of RAM, and its memory limit is nearly 2 Gbyte. The second Gbyte is provided by the swap file; when Windows needs more memory than you have physical RAM, it moves some data from RAM to a swap file on your hard disk to make room. If this happens more than occasionally, the situation is called *thrashing*, which results in Windows slowing to a crawl as it continually moves data from RAM to disk and back again. If your XP PC has only 500 Mbytes of RAM, it will begin thrashing as it boots, and will be frustratingly slow. The only fix for this is to increase RAM to at least 1 Gbyte. Removing programs, defragging, and other such measures will not improve the situation at all, despite what fraudulent TV ads say.

Instead of adding RAM, you could switch to Linux, although for an old PC you will have to use a lightweight distribution, such as Xubuntu. (Mainstream Linux distributions, such as Ubuntu, require modern display controllers.) The only

difference between these and the mainstream cousins, such as Ubuntu, is that the displays are simpler; that is, you lose some of the visual bling that the software vendors think you want; both types support all the same applications. On the same laptop as above, Xubuntu used only 210 Mbytes of RAM, compared to XP's 814 Mbytes. Linux thus provides a way to extend the useful life of old PCs by many years. This approach is especially attractive for laptops, whose hardware is difficult to upgrade.

If you want to keep using XP, you have little choice but to increase the amount of its RAM. Beyond this there are other steps you can take, although their effects on performance will be much smaller. Before you do any of the following, back up your entire PC. If you haven't already, use your favorite anti-virus software to get rid of any malware, use Microsoft Update to bring the system up to date, and update the drivers. Then look at the installed programs with the sequence *Start* ® *Control Panel* ® *Add or Remove Programs*. Highlight each in turn to see how much disk space it occupies, how often you use it, and the

date you used it last. Ask yourself if you really need it, and if not click the *Remove* button to remove it. This will free disk space and may speed up your PC if the program has a module that resides in RAM. On my laptop, I haven't used Adobe Reader for over five years, and I could recover 86 Mbytes of disk space by removing it.

You can clean up a drive with the following sequence: Double-click on *Computer* ® right-click on the desired drive ® select *Properties* ® click on the *Disk Cleanup* button.

On my laptop, I could recover almost 22 Mbytes of disk space by deleting Downloaded Program Files, Temporary Internet Files, Offline Webpages and Temporary files. (And I could recover almost an additional 3.7 Gbytes by compressing old files, which I prefer not to do.)

You may gain some speed by disabling some of the visual display effects. Navigate *Start* ® *Control Panel* ® *System* ® *Advanced* tab ® in the *Performance* box click on *Settings* and uncheck everything except:

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Show shadows under menus,
Show shadows under mouse pointer,
Show translucent selection rectangle,
Smooth edges of screen fonts,
Use drop shadows for icons labels on the desktop,
and
Use visual styles on windows and buttons.

The following will recover an impressive amount of disk space, but do it only if you have a recent back-up that you know to be good. Move to the directory *C:\Windows* and make the hidden items visible by clicking on *Tools* (in the menu bar), selecting *Folder Options*, selecting the *View* tab, and the selecting the *Show hidden files and folders* item. You will find a large number of directories whose names begin and end with \$ and include "Uninstall" somewhere in between. These allow you to back out of patches, but it is most unlikely you will ever have to do this, especially if your system is running well. (My laptop had 339 such folders, occupying over 250 Mbytes.) You can delete them and recover the space, but be very careful not to delete anything else, in particular,

directories whose names begin and end with \$ but don't include "Uninstall". It would be prudent not to empty the Recycle Bin for a few days, until you're sure you haven't broken anything.

CCleaner (<http://www.piriform.com/CCLEANER>) is a clean-up tool with a good reputation. It takes a more aggressive approach than does the disk cleanup procedure discussed above. There is a free version, but read the installer screens carefully as it will install a Google toolbar unless you uncheck the appropriate box. The first time you run the program, click on the Analyze button to see what it will do; the screen-shot below shows the effect on my laptop. (I had earlier performed the Windows Disk Cleanup described above.)

It claimed to find almost an additional 83 Mbytes of disk space that could be freed, although it removed only about 80 Mbytes. The program also includes tools to clean up the registry, uninstall programs, manage system restore points, and wipe disk drives, and will also show what programs run at startup. For more information see <http://www.howtogeek.com/>

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113382/how-to-use-ccleaner-like-a-pro-9-tips-tricks/.

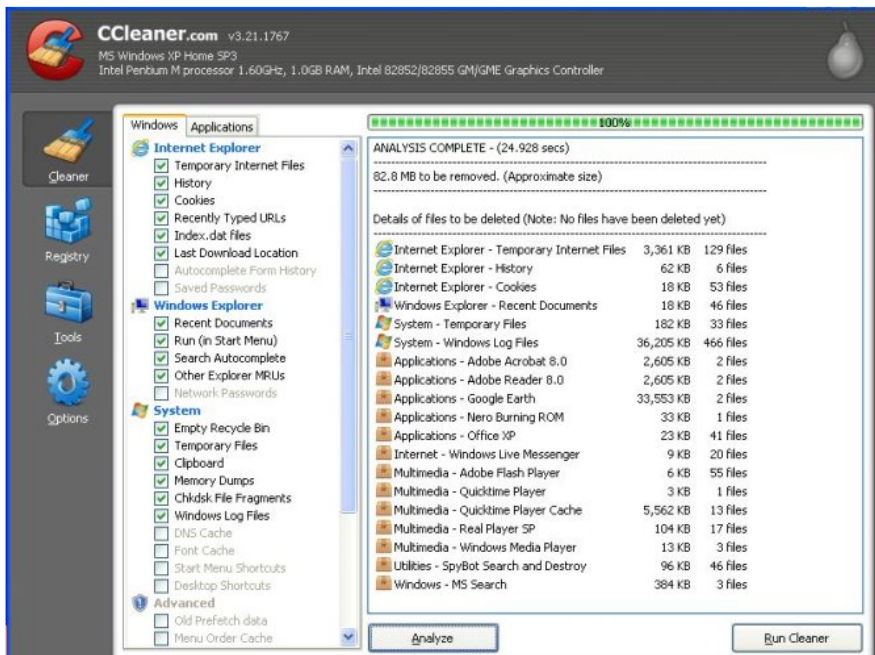
Finally, a different company has developed an add-on, CCEnhancer (<http://singularlabs.com/software/ccenhancer/>). On my laptop, this add-on allowed CCleaner to find 10.7 Mbytes of additional files. However, CCEnhancer requires .NET 3.5, which uses several hundred Mbytes; if you don't already have this installed, forget about CCEnhancer as what it can recover is only a small fraction of the space .NET will occupy.

I haven't mentioned defragging because I've never found that it improves performance by any detectable amount. I'm not saying it's a bad idea, just that you shouldn't expect any performance change.

Also consider a hardware approach to increasing disk space. In particular, USB hard disks are inexpensive and easily installed on both desktops and laptops, and although they are much slower than internal hard drives, they

are entirely satisfactory for storing data that you don't access frequently.

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Get creative with Text Boxes

Nancy DeMarte, Regular Columnist (Office Talk), Sarasota PCUG, Florida

Newsletter: PC Monitor (www.spcug.org) ndemarte (at) Verizon.net

When you use Microsoft Office, you create and edit text all the time. Word, of course, is dominated by text; Excel and PowerPoint both use text in many of their functions. All recent versions of Office also include a tool called a "text box" for special uses of text. Let's find out what it is and how to use it.

A text box is a specialized shape in which you can enter text. It functions outside the regular margin constraints of a document and can be moved or resized as needed. A text box is useful for adding a caption to a photo or annotating a diagram or chart. If you want to emphasize an important statement in a document, you can use a text box to repeat the statement in a "pull quote" and locate it in an unexpected spot, such as along a margin (known as a Sidebar) or across columns in the document. Its flexibility makes a text box useful in many situations.

Text boxes have most of the same properties as shapes. In Word 2007 and 2010, when you click the Insert tab, then Text Box, you open the Text Box gallery of 36 preformatted text boxes, as well as the "Draw text box" option. If one of the preset boxes meets your needs, click to insert it into the document. Older versions of Word lack this gallery, but you can still draw a text box, which is most often my choice. Click "Draw text box" at the bottom of the gallery. Then click anywhere in your document where you want the text box to appear and drag diagonally down the page to the right to create the text box. At first the box covers a portion of the normal text. This is because the default text wrapping setting is "in front of text." If you don't want the text box to hide the document text, select the text box so "handles" appear around the box. At

this point, the Text Box Tools Format tab appears on the ribbon. Click Format, and then Text Wrapping in the Arrange group. Change the setting to Tight, which will position the text box within the existing text and also allow you to move the text box. Do this by clicking an edge so a crossed arrows icon appears and dragging it to a new location. You can also resize the box by dragging an edge or corner. To enter text in the box, replace the informational text with your own.

Once a text box is created and located in the document, it can be formatted in many ways. To format the text, select it, and a small version of the Font group on the Home tab will appear. Use these tools to change the font style, size, color, and other attributes. (You can also click the Home tab and use the full set of options in the Font group.) To format the text box itself, select it and use the tools on the Text Box Tools Format tab. For example, you can fill the box with a color, remove or change the border styles, make the text read vertically, or add special 3-D effects.

(Continued Above Right)

Office 2010, select the text box, and click and drag the little green rotator circle above the box to rotate it left or right. In Word 2007, for an unknown reason, classic text boxes cannot be rotated, even though shapes can. One way to work around this problem is to create a text box, cut it using the Cut command on the Home tab, and then paste it as a "Picture (Windows Metafile)" using the Paste Special command option under the Paste icon.

Occasionally, you might create a text box in Word that you'd like to reuse at a later time. You can save it by selecting the text inside the box and then clicking Insert and the arrow under the Text Box icon. Choose "Save Selection to Text Box Gallery."

In Office 2007 and 2010, text boxes are not limited to a rectangular shape. You can add text to any of the items in the shapes gallery. Click Insert – Shapes and click a shape. Click in your document and draw the shape in the same way you drew the text box. Change the text wrapping to Tight as you did above, then right click inside the shape and choose "Add Text." The large number of shape choices gives you many options for text boxes. Another approach is to begin with a classic text box, even after it is filled with text. Select it, which opens the Text Box Tools Format tab. Click Format and select "Change shape," which opens the shapes gallery. Click a new shape, and the text box transforms into that shape with all its contents intact. Another interesting possibility is inserting a photo or piece of clip art into a text box. With the text box or shape selected, click the Insert tab – Picture. Click the photo you want, then Insert. The photo appears in the text box, resized to fit. The same steps work to insert clip art, charts or tables within text boxes.

Text boxes can be rotated for a dramatic effect. In

(Continued Below Left)

Besides Word, text boxes appear in Excel and PowerPoint 2007/10. Neither program contains a text box gallery, but each has the "Draw a Text Box" tool, which gives you all the functions that Word does, including rotation. You can also start with a shape and include text by right clicking and using the "Edit Text" command.

Have a little fun. Create a few text boxes in your next document, spreadsheet or presentation.

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Using the Social Security Death Records

Bill Ellis, Member, Computer Users of Erie, PA
(www.cuerie.com) [willardellis8 \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:willardellis8@gmail.com)

The Social Security Administration's Death Index (SSDI) can be a boon to beginning genealogists. The Social Security number is the most valuable piece of

information when seeking a number of other documents. It is essential for ordering paper copies of original death records, obituaries, and more. The

SSDI is the first step in obtaining this information. If you can only trace your U.S. ancestry back to your grandparents or possibly great-grandparents, the Social Security Administration can help you find where they were born, the names of their parents, and more. The SSDI can be especially helpful for those researching immigrants as the data often shows where the individual was born in "the old country."

The Social Security Administration was created by an act of law in 1935 as part of President Roosevelt's New Deal program. The act laid out a retirement system for many Americans, although not all. The act also created a new governmental agency to manage the program. In the following 69 years, the Social Security Administration has become one of the largest agencies in the federal government.

The Social Security Administration started computerizing records in 1962. This made it possible to produce an index of people who had Social Security numbers and are deceased. The information in the Social Security Death Index for people who died prior to 1962 is sketchy since SSA's death

information was not automated before that date. Persons who died before 1962 are rarely listed in the SSDI. Some of the online Web sites advertise that the data they possess will contain information about deaths "as early as 1937," but that claim is a bit misleading; 99.9% of the information is for 1962 and later.

Initially, the Social Security Administration only recorded the deaths of individuals who were receiving retirement benefits from the Administration. Those who died before reaching retirement age were not listed. Neither were those who had different retirement systems, such as railroad workers, school teachers, and other municipal, state, and federal employees. In the 1970s the railroad and many other retirement systems were merged into the Social Security system. Deaths of those retirees then started appearing in the SSDI.

In the late 1980s and after, all deaths in the U.S. were reported to the Social Security Administration and recorded in the SSDI. You can find deaths of children and non-retired adults listed for the 1990s,

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but not for earlier years.

Because legal aliens in the U.S. can obtain a Social Security card, their names may appear in the SSDI if their deaths were reported, even if the death occurred overseas.

The online SSDI databases contain the following information fields:

Social Security number
Surname
Given Name
Date of Death
Date of Birth
Last Known Residence
Location of Last Benefit
Date and Place of Issuance

You can access the Social Security Death Index at no charge on a number of Web sites, including:

New England Historic Genealogical Society (this database was updated just a few weeks ago with the latest data through June, 2004) <http://www.newenglandancestors.org/research/database/ss/default.asp>

(Continued Below Left)

Family Tree Legends (this version has several search capabilities not found on other sites): <http://www.familytreelegends.com/records/ssdi>

Ancestry.com:

<http://www.ancestry.com/search/rectype/vital/ssdi/main.htm>

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (the Mormons) offer the Social Security Death Index on their popular Family Search site.

Keep in mind, however, that the online SSDI database is only an index -- an abbreviated listing. The Social Security Administration holds additional information that can be a genealogical jackpot. The index listing of an ancestor is merely your ticket to this jackpot.

From 1936 on, anyone who has applied for a Social Security Card filled out an application form (SS-5) that the U.S. Government keeps on file. This application form (SS-5) contains the following information:

Full name

(Continued On Next Page)

Using the Social Security Death Records, *continued*

- *Full name at birth (including maiden name)
- *Present mailing address
- Age at last birthday
- Date of birth
- *Place of birth (city, county, state)
- *Father's full name "regardless of whether living or dead"
- *Mother's full name, including maiden name, "regardless of whether living or dead"
- *Sex and race
- *Ever applied for SS number/Railroad Retirement before? Yes/No
- *Current employer's name and address
- *Date signed
- *Applicant's signature

The items marked with an asterisk are not available in the online SSDI database.

The SS-5 form is obviously much more valuable to the genealogist than the limited information shown in the online death index. The Social Security Administration makes copies of the original Social Security application form (the SS-5) available to

anyone who requests information on a deceased individual. You can obtain a photocopy of the SS-5 form by writing to the Social Security Administration.

The SSA charges \$27.00 for each individual SS-5 copy (\$16 for an abbreviated NUMIDENT form, but most genealogists will prefer the SS-5 itself). The SSA is not in the business of doing genealogical research and cannot, by law, expend Social Security Trust Fund money for purposes not related to the operation of the Social Security program. The \$27 fee is intended to offset the cost to the government whenever SSA provides information from its files for non-program purposes.

There is no standard form to fill out when requesting a copy of the deceased's SS-5. Instead, you must write a letter. You can "copy-and-paste" the following sample letter into your favorite word processor, then change all the information shown inside the curly braces { }:

Social Security Administration
Office of Earnings Operations

(Continued Above Right)

FOIA Workgroup
300 N. Greene Street
P.O. Box 33022
Baltimore, Maryland 21290
Re: Freedom of Information Act Request
Dear Freedom of Information Officer,
I am writing this request under the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. Section 552. I hereby request a copy of the SS-5, Application for Social Security Card for the following individual:
{first name} {last name}
{Social Security Number as obtained from the online SSDI}
Birth: {Date of birth}
Death: {Date of death}
This individual is deceased, having been listed in the Social Security Administration's Death Master File. I am requesting a copy of this person's original SS-5 form. I understand the fee for this service is \$27.00. Included is a check for \$27.00 made out to the Social Security Administration to cover any administrative costs required by this request.

(Continued Below Left)

Please respond to my request upon receipt of this initial correspondence. Thank you for your attention and assistance.

Sincerely,

{Your name}

{Your full address}

Daytime Phone Number: {Your telephone number}

If you want to obtain the SS-5 forms for more than one person, it is suggested that you write separate letters and separate checks, and mail them in separate envelopes. Be patient. You may have to wait several months for the response to your letter(s).

If you cannot find a person in the SSDI, the Social Security Administration may still be able to help. You may request an "SSN search." The SS will try to find the person's Social Security Number, even for those deaths before 1962. To request this service, you must send \$29 and provide the person's full name, state of birth, and date of birth to:

Social Security Administration
OEO FOIA Workgroup
300 N. Green Street

(Continued On Nex Page)

P.O. Box 33022
Baltimore, Maryland 21290-3022

Providing names of parents is also helpful, especially with common surnames. Be sure also to provide proof of death as the records of living individuals are not publicly available.

Social Security Numbers

It is interesting to note that you can tell where a Social Security Number was issued simply by looking at the first few digits of the number. This does not tell where the person was born, only where he or she was living when the number was issued. Nonetheless, it can be a valuable clue as to where to look for additional information.

The Social Security Account Number (SSAN) is divided into three sets of digits. For example, let's take 123-45-6789. The 3 digits in the first group indicate the state or territory in which the number was originally issued. The second group of 2 numbers is used to define the people within the state. The third group of 4 digits is simply issued in

numerical sequence.

The following list shows the area indicated by first 3 digits:

001-003 New Hampshire
004-007 Maine
008-009 Vermont
010-034 Massachusetts
035-039 Rhode Island
040-049 Connecticut
050-134 New York
135-158 New Jersey
159-211 Pennsylvania
212-220 Maryland
221-222 Delaware
223-231 Virginia
232-236 West Virginia
237-246 North Carolina
247-251 South Carolina
252-260 Georgia
261-267 Florida
268-302 Ohio
303-317 Indiana

(Continued Above Right)

318-361 Illinois
362-386 Michigan
387-399 Wisconsin
400-407 Kentucky
408-415 Tennessee
416-424 Alabama
425-428 Mississippi
429-432 Arkansas
433-439 Louisiana
440-448 Oklahoma
449-467 Texas
468-477 Minnesota
478-485 Iowa
486-500 Missouri
501-502 North Dakota
503-504 South Dakota
505-508 Nebraska
509-515 Kansas
516-519 Idaho
520 Wyoming
521-524 Colorado
525 New Mexico (also 585 below)
526-527 Arizona

(Continued Below Left)

528-529 Utah
530 Nevada
531-539 Washington
540-544 Oregon
545-573 California
574 Alaska
575-576 Hawaii
577-579 District of Columbia
580 U.S. Virgin Islands
581-585 Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa
585 New Mexico (some 585 numbers)
586-699 Unassigned
700-729 Railroad Retirement Board
730-899 Unassigned

A few Social Security Numbers beginning with a 9 have been issued, but these are very rare.

For more information about obtaining information from the Social Security Administration, look at: http://www.socialsecurity.gov/foia/foia_guide.htm

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SIG News

LUNICS (Linux/Unix)

Andreas Meyer (lunics@acgnj.org)
<http://www.acgnj.org/groups/lunics.html>

LUNICS is a group for those who share an interest in Unix and similar operating systems. While we do quite a bit with Linux, we've also been known to discuss Solaris and BSD as well. Recent meetings have followed a Random Access format. See our web page for further information. (We meet on the first Monday of each month, at 8:00 PM). ☐

Main Meeting

Evan Williams (president@acgnj.org)
<http://www.acgnj.org/groups/mainmeet.html>

We meet on the first Friday of the month, at 8:00 PM. Each December, this meeting includes our Annual Business Meeting and Officer Elections. *No* meetings in July or August. ☐

Layman's Forum

Matt Skoda (som359@aol.com)
<http://www.acgnj.org/groups/laymans.html>

This SIG discusses issues of interest to novice users or those planning to get started in computing. Watch our Web page for updates and announcements. We meet at the same time as the Hardware Workshop. (On the second Monday of the month, at 8:00 PM). *No* meetings in July and August. ☐

Hardware Workshop

Mike Reagan (hardware@acgnj.org)

This group is dedicated to repairing, refurbishing and/or recycling older computers. Ten people attended the first meeting, so there is still a market for this type of event. Although we looked at some of the older equipment stored in the back room, most of our time was spent in talking about past experiences and planning for the future. Hopefully, we can establish a viable long-term schedule of projects, and keep the interest of those who attended this inaugural meeting. If you have a hardware problem, bring it in and we can all help fix or demolish it. (No guarantees either way.) We meet at the same time as the Layman's Forum. (On the second Monday of each month, at 8:00 PM). ☐

Java

Mike Redlich (mike@redlich.net)
<http://www.redlich.net/javasig/javasig.html>

This SIG covers beginner, intermediate, and advanced level Java programming. Primary focus is on developing useful/practical applets and applications. (We meet on the second Tuesday of each month, at 7:30 PM). ☐

Mobile Devices

Brenda Bell (mobdevsig@acgnj.org)

The Mobile Devices SIG focuses largely on current-generation cellphones and smart phones (such as Blackberry, Android, iPhone) which bridge the gap between basic cell phones and traditional computers, and how they can help you manage and organize your life. Our membership ranges from those who have recently acquired their first, basic cellphone to those who develop applications for today's modern smart phones, iPods, and ultra-portable computers. While we expect to spend much of our time investigating the built-in features and specialized applications available to modern smart phones, if you bring your basic (or multimedia) cell phone, iPod, or other mobile device with questions on how to use it, where to find applications, or what features they have, we are always happy to help! Meet and greet and plan where this event goes. Bring all your ideas, PDAs, fancy phones, etc. (We meet on the second Wednesday of alternate months (we get the even ones), at 7:30PM). ☐

WebDev

Evan Williams (webdev@acgnj.org)

This SIG is an open forum for all Website Development techniques and technologies, to encourage study and development of web sites of all kinds. All languages will be considered and examined. The current project is a CMS for the club. Anyone interested in starting a new project, come to the meeting and announce/explain. Provide as much detail as possible. WebDev should be an all-encompassing development and examination forum for all issues, applications, OS, languages and systems one can use to build Websites. We currently

have two web development language SIGs: .NET and Java; but other languages and OS need to be investigated, examined and tested; Windows, Linux, UNIX, DEC, Vax, HP etc. Intel-PC, Motorola - MAC etc. (We meet on the second Wednesday of alternate months (we get the odd ones), at 7:30 PM). ☞

Investment Software

Jim Cooper (jim@thecoopers.org)

http://www.acgnj.org/groups/sig_investment.html

The Investment SIG continues with presentations on how to use analysis programs TC2000 and TCNet. Large charts are presented on our pull down screen and illustrate the application of computer scans and formulas to find stocks for profitable investments. Technical analysis determines buy points, sell points and projected moves. Technical analysis can also be used on fundamentals such as earnings, sales growth, etc. We're no longer focusing on just Telechart. If you are using (or interested in) Tradestation, eSignal, VectorVest, or just in learning how to select and use charting and technical analysis, come join us!! (We meet on the second Thursday of the month, at 8 PM). ☞

NJ Gamers

Gregg McCarthy (greggmajestic@gmail.com)

<http://www.NJGamers.com>

www.lanparty.com

The Friday Night Frag starts at 6:00 PM on the second Friday of each month, and keeps going until 12 Noon on Saturday - 18 hours for 5 bucks!

BYOC - Bring your own computer.

BYOF - Bring your own food.

And if you don't like sitting on metal folding chairs...

BYO chair! ☞

Web Browser (Formerly Firefox)

David McRitchie (firefox@acgnj.org).

This SIG is an open forum for all Firefox and Mozilla techniques and technologies, to encourage study and development of web sites of all kinds. All browsers will be considered and examined. All members and guests are invited to check out the design concepts and voice their opinion. (We meet on the third Monday of each month, at 7:30 PM). ☞

C/C++ Programming

Bruce Arnold (barnold@ieee.org)

<http://acgnj.barnold.us/index.html>

This is a forum for discussion of programming in general, beginning and intermediate level C, C++, C-Win programming, hardware, algorithms, and operating systems. We demonstrate real programming in a non-intimidating way, presenting complete code for working programs in 3-5 sheets of paper. (We meet on the third Tuesday of each month, at 7:30 PM). **No** meetings in July or August. ☞

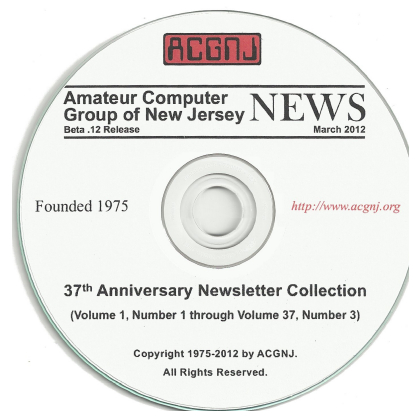
Window Pains

John Raff (jraff@comcast.net)

<http://www.acgnj.org/groups/winpains.html>

Intended to provide members with Windows oriented discussions, Microsoft and Linux style. Directed to more technological level of attendee, but newbies are welcomed. (We meet on the third Friday of the month at 8:00 PM). **No** meetings in July or August. ☞

37th Anniversary Newsletter CD Now On Sale



Beta .12 Release.

\$8.00, including postage.

(\$7.00 if you pick up a copy at a meeting).

Get yours today!

Back Issues Still Needed

Our collection remains incomplete. Below is a list of missing newsletters. Anyone who lends us one of these (or supplies a good clear copy) will receive the next CD as our thanks.

1975: #2 and #3 (dates uncertain).

1976: January.

1984: August.

1985: June, July, August, September. ☞

Guru Corner

If you need help with any of the technologies listed below, you can call on the person listed. Please be considerate and call before 10 PM.

Software

HTML	Mike Redlich	908-246-0410
	Jo-Anne Head	908-769-7385
ColdFusion	Jo-Anne Head	908-769-7385
CSS	Frank Warren	908-756-1681
	Jo-Anne Head	908-769-7385
Java	Mike Redlich	908-246-0410
C++	Bruce Arnold	908-735-7898
	Mike Redlich	908-246-0410
ASP	Mike Redlich	908-246-0410
Perl	John Raff	973-560-9070
	Frank Warren	908-756-1681
XML	Mike Redlich	908-246-0410
Genealogy	Frank Warren	908-756-1681
Home Automation	Frank Warren	908-756-1681

Operating Systems

Windows 3.1	Ted Martin	732-636-1942
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Discount Computer Magazine Price List

As described by the DealsGuy

	1 yr	2 yr	3 yr
Computer Games	\$10.95	20.95	29.95
Computer Gaming World	14.95	28.95	41.95
Computer Shopper1	16.97	32.95	47.95
Dr. Dobbs Journal	15.95	30.95	
Mac Addict	10.97		
Mac Home Journal	15.97	29.97	
Mac World	12.95		
Maximum PC	9.95	18.95	27.95
Microsoft System Journal	21.95	39.95	
PC Gamer	12.95		
PC Magazine (22/44/66 Issues)	25.97	48.95	68.95
PC World	16.95		
Wired	6.00	12.00	17.00

These prices are for new subscriptions and renewals. All orders must be accompanied by a check, cash or Money Order. Make payable to Herb Goodman, and mail to:

Herb Goodman, 8295 Sunlake Drive, Boca Raton, FL 33496

Telephone: 561-488-4465, e-mail: hgoodman@prod-igy.net

Please allow 10 to 12 weeks for your magazines to start. For renewals you must supply an address label from your present subscription to insure the correct start of your renewal. As an extra service I will mail a renewal notice about 4 months prior to their expiration date. I carry more than 300 titles at excellent prices — email for prices. ☐

ACGNJ MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Sign up online at www.acgnj.org/membershipApplication.html and pay dues with PayPal.

US/CANADA		Dues	STUDENT	SENIOR CITIZEN (Over 65)
1 Year	\$25		\$20	\$20
2 Years	\$40			
3 Years	\$55			\$45

Mail this application and your check to:
AMATEUR COMPUTER GROUP OF NEW JERSEY, INC., P.O. BOX 135, SCOTCH PLAINS, NJ 07076

☐ New Member ☐ Renewal ☐ Address Change

First Name _____ Last Name _____ Phone _____

Mailing Address _____ E-Mail _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ URL _____

What topics would you like to see covered at club meetings? _____

Other Local Computer Groups		
Princeton Macintosh User Group: 7:15 pm 2nd Tuesday, Jadwin Hall, A-10, Washington Rd, Princeton, (609) 252-1163, www.pmug-nj.org	Linux Users Group in Princeton: 7 pm, 2nd Wednesday, Lawrence Branch Mercer Library, Rt#1 & Darrah Lane, Lawrence NJ http://www.lugip.org	New York PC: 3rd Thurs, 7 pm, PS 41, 116 W 11th St. For info call hotline, (212) 533-NYPC, http://www.nypc.org
Computer Education Society of Philadelphia: Meetings & Workshops at Jem Electronics, 6622 Castor Ave, Philadelphia PA. www.cesop.org/	Brookdale Computer Users Group: 7 pm, 3rd Friday, Brookdale Community College, Bldg MAS Rm 100, Lincroft NJ. (732)-739-9633. www.bcug.com	NJ Macintosh User Group: 8 pm, 3rd Tuesday, Allwood Branch Library, Lyall Rd, Clifton NJ. (201) 893-5274 http://www.njmug.org
PC User Group of So. Jersey: 2nd Mon., 7 pm, Trinity Presb. Church, 499 Rt 70 E, Cherry Hill, NJ. L. Horn, (856) 983-5360	Hunterdon Computer Club: 8:30 am, 3rd Sat, Hunterdon Medical Center, Rt 31, Flemington NJ. www.hunterdoncomputerclub.org , (908) 995-4042.	NY Amateur Computer Group: 2nd Thurs, 7 pm, Rm 806 Silver Bldg, NYU, 32 Waverly Pl, NYC. http://www.nyacc.org
Morris Micro Computer Club: 7 pm 2nd Thurs., Morris County Library, Hanover Ave, Morristown NJ, (973) 267-0871. http://www.morrismicro.com	Central Jersey Computer Club: 8 pm, 4th Friday, Rm 74, Armstrong Hall, College of NJ. Rich Williams, (609) 466-0909.	NJ PC User Group: 2nd Thurs, Monroe Rm at Wyckoff Public Library, 7 pm. Maureen Shannon, (201) 853-7432, www.njpcug.org
Philadelphia Area Computer Society: 3rd Sat, 12 noon Main Meeting, groups 8 am-3 pm. Upper Moreland Middle School, Hatboro PA. (215) 764-6338. www.pacsnet.org	NJ Computer Club: 6:15 pm, 2nd Wednesday except Jul & Aug, North Branch Reformed Church, 203 Rt 28, Bridgewater NJ. http://www.njcc.org	Princeton PC Users Group: 2nd Monday, Lawrenceville Library, Alt Rt 1 & Darrah Lane, Lawrenceville, Paul Kurivchack (908) 218-0778, http://www.ppcug-nj.org

Classified

FREE TO MEMBERS. Use our classified ads to sell off your surplus computer stuff. Send copy to Classified, ACGNJ NEWS, P.O. Box 135, Scotch Plains NJ 07076 or e-mail to the editor, bdegroot@ptd.net. Classified ads are free to members, one per issue. Non-members pay \$10. Send check payable to ACGNJ Inc. with copy. Reasonable length, please.



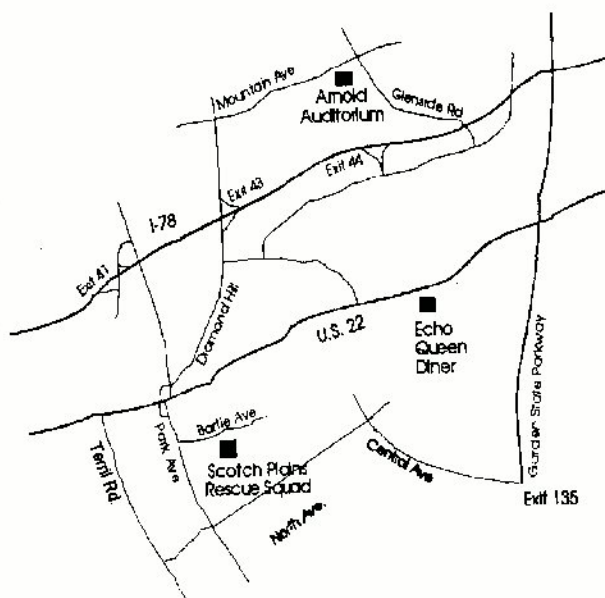
Radio and TV Programs

Computer Radio Show, WBAI
99.5 FM, NY, Wed. 8-9 p.m.

Software Review, The Learning Channel, Saturday
10-10:30 p.m.

On Computers, WCTC 1450 AM, New Brunswick, Sunday
1-4 p.m. To ask questions call (800) 677-0874.

PC Talk, Sunday from 8 p.m. to 10 p.m., 1210 AM Philadelphia.
1-800-876-WPEN



Directions to Meetings at Scotch Plains Rescue Squad, 1916 Bartle Ave., Scotch Plains NJ

From New York City or Northern New Jersey

Take Route 1&9 or the Garden State Parkway to US 22 Westbound.

From Southern New Jersey

Take Parkway north to Exit 135 (Clark). Stay on left of ramp, follow circle under Parkway. Bear right to Central Avenue; follow to Westfield and under RR overpass. Left at light to North Avenue; follow to light in Fanwood. Right on Martine (which becomes Park Ave). Right on Bartle Ave in middle of shopping district. Scotch Plains Rescue Squad (2-story brick) is located on the right. Do not park in the row next to the building — you'll be towed.

From I-78 (either direction)

Take exit 41 (Scotch Plains); follow signs to US 22. Turn right at light at bottom of hill and use overpass to cross Rt. 22. Follow US 22 Westbound directions.

From US 22 Westbound

Exit at Park Avenue, Scotch Plains after McDonalds on the right, diagonally opposite Scotchwood Diner on the left, immediately before the overpass. After exiting, turn left at the light and use overpass to cross US 22. Bear right at bottom of ramp to continue south on Park Avenue. Turn left at the second light (a staggered intersection). Scotch Plains Rescue Squad (2-story brick) is on the right. Do not park in the row next to the building — you'll be towed. We meet on the second floor, entering by the door at the right front of the building.

From Western New Jersey

Take US 22 Eastbound to the Park Avenue exit. The exit is about a mile past Terrill Road and immediately past the overpass. Exit onto Park Avenue South and follow the directions above to the Rescue Squad building. ☐